

REMARKS

Claims 1-40 have been examined.

Claims 1-14 have been canceled.

Independent claims 15, 28 and 29 have been herein amended to more clearly define the invention. Antecedent support for amendments can be found in Fig. 3 and page 11, line 2 to 13, line 22.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 8-16, 22-30, 32-33 and 36-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being anticipated by Norman (6,011,802). Claims 6, 20 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Normal in view of Christie et al. (6,690,674). Claims 7, 21 and 35 stand rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Norman. Claims 3, 17 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Norman in view of Fedders et al. (6,603,776).

In the Office Action its argued that Fig. 4 of Norman shows a transfer system between the SDH and SONET networks. Norman's transfer system 158 has a gateway through which the SDH and SONET communicate. The gateway converts the SDH communication signal at the TUG-2 level and converts a SONET communication signal at the VTG level. The TUG-2's are mapped to VTG's and the VTG level is mapped to TUG-2 format.

According to applicant's claim 15 a transmission unit includes a first signal interface means for receiving a first network signal and converting the received first network signal into a first internal signal with a fixed bit rate, and for sending an outgoing first network signal which is converted from a given second remapped internal signal with the same fixed bit rate. The transmission unit also comprises a second signal interface means to provide similar functions for the second network. The first and second signal interface means are illustrated for example in

FIG. 3 as the first and second signal interfaces 2 and 3. They are distinguishable over those in other embodiments of the present invention, as well as over any conventional transmission units, in that they convert received network signals into internal signals with a fixed bit rate before subjecting them to downward conversion at the corresponding demappers 11-3 and 11-4.

Claim 15 is rejected based on the Normal reference, stating that Norman meets the limitation of the first and second signal interface means, and pointing out that column 4, lines 20 to 28 are relevant. Applicants respectfully disagree with this interpretation of Norman since the cited paragraph merely describes incompatibility of SONET and SDH in terms of physical interface speeds and fails to suggest conversion of SONET or SDH network signals into internal signals with a fixed bit rate before performing downward conversion. It is therefore believed that the above-described feature of the first and second signal interface means is not taught by the Norman reference.

The same arguments apply to claims 28 and 29 since these claims include the limitation of claim 15 described above.

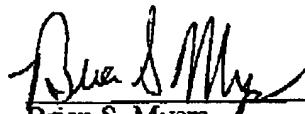
Christie as well as Fedders et al. even if taken in combination with Norman fail to show or suggest a transmission unit as claimed in independent claims 15, 28 and 29.

It is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1, 28 and 29 and claims 16-27 dependent on claim 15 as well as claims 30-40 dependent directly or indirectly on claim 29 are patentably distinguishable over the prior art and these claims should be allowed.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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